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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR INR/R/MR; IIP/RW; IIP/RNY (FRANK); BBG/VOA; IIP/WEU; AF/PA; EUR/WE (DEBORAH MENNUTI)/P/SP; D/C (MCCOO); EUR/PA (BERBENA); INR/P; INR/EUC; PM; OSC ISA FOR ILN; NEA; WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC/WEUROPE; DOC FOR ITA/EUR/FR AND PASS USTR/PA (ANN LUZZATO); USINCEUR FOR PAO; NATO/PA; MOSCOW/PA; ROME/PA; BRUSSELS/PA; USVIENNA FOR USDEL OSCE.

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - PRESIDENT BUSH INAUGURATION AND SECOND BUSH ADMINISTRATION
PARIS - THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

PRESIDENT BUSH INAUGURATION AND SECOND BUSH ADMINISTRATION

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT BUSH IS ONE OF TODAY'S MAJOR FRONT PAGE AND EDITORIAL STORIES. WHILE SOME FRONT PAGES REMAIN NEUTRAL, "GEORGE W. BUSH, ACT II" (LE FIGARO); "BUSH'S CHALLENGES" (LES ECHOS); OTHERS TAKE A STAND: "BUSH'S SECOND TERM WILL BE MORE LIBERAL" (LA TRIBUNE); OTHERS STILL ARE MORE AGGRESSIVE: "WILL BUSH GO TO WAR AGAINST IRAN?" (FRANCE SOIR) AND "OFF TO A BAD START" (COMMUNIST L'HUMANITE)

LE FIGARO'S EDITORIAL CONTENDS THAT "BUSH II WILL BE A CONTINUATION OF BUSH I" AND LIBERATION THAT "BUSH MAY SPEND HIS SECOND TERM TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF IRAQ." FOR BRUNO FRAPPAT IN CATHOLIC LA CROIX "WE HAVE NO CHOICE, LIKE THE FIRST TIME AROUND, BUT TO WAIT AND HOPE."

COMMENTING ON CONDOLEEZZA RICE'S REMARKS ABOUT THE "WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY" PRESENTED BY THE TSUNAMI, JACQUES AMALRIC WRITES IN LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION: "HER BLUNDER COULD EITHER MAKE ONE CRINGE OR SMILE. BUT AT LEAST IT HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING SINCERE IN AN OCEAN OF HYPOCRISY AND FALSE GOOD SENTIMENTS..."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

BUSH II

"A TIME FOR DIPLOMACY"

PIERRE ROUSSELIN IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (01/20): "SINCE IN WASHINGTON IT IS 'TIME FOR DIPLOMACY,' ON THIS SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC WE MUST FULLY SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY. IT WOULD INDEED BE A WASTE OF TIME TO EXPECT ANY ADDITIONAL SIGNAL FROM THE U.S. OTHER THAN THE ONE MADE BY CONDOLEEZZA RICE. WHY NOT TAKE PART IN THIS DESIRE FOR CHANGE? THIS IS WHAT FRANCE HAS BEEN TRYING TO DO LATELY: 'REVITALIZING THE TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP' HAS BECOME A PRIORITY FOR THE ELYSEE. EVERYONE IS SHOWING ITS GOOD INTENTIONS. BUT LET'S NOT BE TOO NAIVE: PRESIDENT BUSH IS NOT GOING TO CHANGE. IN HIS VIEW, HIS REELECTION IS PROOF THAT HIS CHOICES WERE THE RIGHT CHOICES, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE UNPOPULAR ABROAD. BUSH II WILL BE A CONTINUATION OF BUSH I, WITH AN EFFORT MADE IN THE DIRECTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS. IF HE HAS CHANGED HIS TONE, IT IS BECAUSE HE IS TRYING TO FIND AN EXIT TO HIS MISADVENTURES IN IRAQ. OUR OFFICIALS UNDERSTAND IT WOULD BE UNSEEMLY TO REMIND HIM OF THIS. AND SO THEY SUPPORT THE ELECTIONS IN IRAQ, ALTHOUGH THEY DOUBT THEY WILL CHANGE ANYTHING. BUT THIS GESTURE HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED IN WASHINGTON. NEVERTHELESS, SOME TOPICS OF DISSENSION WILL REMAIN, SUCH AS THE KYOTO PROTOCOL, THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE OR MORE GENERALLY MULTILATERALISM. BUT BECAUSE SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS STEM FROM A CHOICE OF WORDS, AND SINCE THE TIME FOR DIPLOMACY HAS COME, WHY NOT GO WITH THE FLOW AND FIND NEW WORDS TO SAY THE SAME THING. WE, LIKE THE U.S., NEED TO BE BETTER UNDERSTOOD."

"IRAQ'S CONSEQUENCES"

PATRICK SABATIER IN LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION (01/20): "PRESIDENT BUSH HAS NO GUARANTEES THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO IMPOSE HIS VERY CONSERVATIVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAM. IDEOLOGICAL INFLEXIBILITY, THE ARROGANCE OF POWER AND INCOMPETENCE IN THE EXECUTION COULD HAVE THE SAME EFFECTS IN DOMESTIC PROGRAMS AS IN IRAQ. BUSH HAS ACCUMULATED A NUMBER OF MISTAKES IN THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM. HE COULD SPEND HIS SECOND TERM TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF IRAQ'S MOVING SANDS TO AVOID A DEFEAT CARRYING DAUNTING CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ENTIRE DEMOCRATIC WORLD."

"BUSH, SECOND CHANCE"

BRUNO FRAPPAT IN CATHOLIC LA CROIX (01/20): "SECOND TERM, SECOND CHANCE. AFTER 9/11, THERE WAS THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE 'PREEMPTIVE' WAR IN IRAQ, BUT ALSO THE NEGLIGENCE OF FORGETTING ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST. AND OF COURSE THERE WAS THAT UNFORTUNATE WORD: 'CRUSADE.' INSTEAD OF TRYING TO BE A BUILDER

OF PEACE, LIKE HIS PREDECESSOR, PRESIDENT BUSH BECAME `A PRESIDENT OF WAR.' IGNORING THE BOOMERANG EFFECT OF THE MASSIVE LIE ON WMD. BUSH IS ON FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEARS AND THE WORLD WITH HIM. HAS HE CHANGED? . WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT HE IS BEGINNING TO SEE THAT DEMOCRATIZING THE WORLD WITH WEAPONS IS NOT SO EASY. BUT HE HAS ALSO MADE A SIGNIFICANT GESTURE TOWARDS MUULTILATERLISM WITH THE TSUNAMI AND THE UN. EVEN IN THE MIDDLE EAST THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE CLOUDS ARE LIFTING. AND SO, LIKE FOUR YEARS AGO, AND BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE, LET'S WAIT AND HOPE."

"BUSH II AND THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES"

FRANCOISE CROUIGNEAU IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LES ECHOS (01/20):
"NO, FUNDAMENTALLY, PRESIDENT BUSH HAS NOT REALLY CHANGED. HIS RE-ELECTION HAS ELICITED A CONFUSING MIX OF CONCERN AND HOPE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD. EVERYONE IS WONDERING WHETHER HE CAN DEAL WITH THE CHALLENGES HE IS FACING. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE ABOUT THE U.S. ECONOMY: FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN PRESIDENT BUSH ARRIVED THE COFFERS WERE FULL, TODAY THE BUDGET DEFICIT HAS HIT A RECORD AND THE DOLLAR IS FLAILING. HAVING EXPERIENCED FIRST HAND THE FLAWS OF UNILATERALISM IN IRAQ, WILL PRESIDENT BUSH BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH HIS ALLIES? THIS IS FAR FROM CERTAIN. TYING NEW RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE UN, ALBEIT WITH RETICENCE, DOES NOT EXCLUDE TRYING TO IMPOSE REFORMS ON THEM. TALKING WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION ABOUT THE THORNY ISSUE OF BOEING AND AIRBUS IS IN NO WAY A SIGN OF WEAKNESS. AMERICA'S PRAGMATISM HAS ALWAYS BEEN DICTATED BY THE INTERESTS OF A NATION WHICH HAS BECOME A SUPERPOWER THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED. WE MUST WAIT AND SEE WHETHER THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES ARE HIS SIZE OR A BIT TOO BIG FOR HIM." WOLFF